

MARYLAND ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND  
OUTDOOR EDUCATION  
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21401



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear MAEOE members,

What an exciting time to be involved in environmental education! We have had a very productive year. After almost four years of effort, our certified environmental education program is about to be unveiled. The program is aligned with the North American Association of Environmental Education's Core Competencies. Look for more information at this year's MAEOE Conference.

Speaking of the conference, you are all invited to join us for our 24th annual conference to be held at the Clarion Hotel in Ocean City, February 27-March 1, 2009. Our theme this year is *Shades of Green*. We have a great program awaiting you, so please do plan on joining us!

Over the past year, MAEOE has been involved with the Maryland No Child Left Inside Coalition's work to provide new federal funding for outdoor learning activities and high-quality environmental education. We are confident that once they are up close with nature, kids will become more engaged with the outdoors and will care more deeply about protecting their environment. Stronger environmental education will pay unexpected dividends in the classroom. MAEOE is also represented on Governor O'Malley's newly appointed Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature. The Partnership, co-chaired by the Secretary of Natural Resources and the State Superintendent of Schools, will create new opportunities for children to connect to nature through outdoor play and learning, and will develop a plan to ensure that all Maryland high school graduates are environmentally literate. With this executive order, Maryland is poised to be a national leader in the movement to connect kids to the environment.

I hope that you are as excited about these new developments in environmental education in our state and that you are eager to help us move forward with our goals. Here's to getting every child outside! -- Sarah Haines, President

## YOU SAY TOMATO, I SAY TOM-AH-TOE: UNDERSTANDING ALL THE "CHILDREN & NATURE" NAMES

If you have felt confused about all the programs in the news lately that have some arrangement of the words "child and nature," "children and nature," and "nature and children," in their titles, you are not alone. After receiving multiple requests for more information on (and clarification of) several similarly named initiatives, we would like to take a moment to provide a brief description of each of these exciting programs and what they may mean for children, educators and parents in Maryland and across the nation.

### The Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature:

In April 2008, Governor O'Malley issued an Executive Order forming the [Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature](#). This executive order-designated Partnership features two co-chairs (the Secretary of Natural Resources and the State Superintendent of Schools) and numerous specific [Partners](#) (individuals representing various organizations).

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*BY THE AGE OF 8,  
CHILDREN CAN  
IDENTIFY 25% MORE  
POKEMON  
CHARACTERS THAN  
WILDLIFE SPECIES*

The goals of the Partnership include examining existing outdoor learning opportunities for students, identifying ways to increase these opportunities, and developing a plan to provide youth with more opportunities for outdoor play, recreation, and learning. To achieve these goals, the Partnership has formed two workgroups: 1) Community & Public Lands: to develop a plan to create nature play zones, connect schools to public lands, increase schoolyard habitats and more; and 2) Environmental Literacy: to develop a state-wide [Environmental Literacy Plan](#) to ensure that all Maryland high school graduates are environmentally literate. The results will be presented to the Governor early next year. For more information please visit the [Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature](#) site.



#### **The Maryland No Child Left Inside Coalition**

The [Maryland No Child Left Inside Coalition](#) was formed to actively support the goals of Governor O'Malley's executive order: the "Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature." Comprised of education, public health, business, conservation, recreation, religious, and youth group organizations, the Maryland NCLI Coalition is now 162 organizations strong, representing over 570,000 Marylanders and growing rapidly. The Maryland NCLIC provides feedback to the workgroups and Partnership, and communicates with Coalition members and the public to keep them informed of progress and alert them to any supportive action that can be taken. For more information on MDNCLIC, including how your organization can become a member, visit [www.mdncli.org](http://www.mdncli.org) or contact [Julie Dieguez](#).



#### **The No Child Left Inside Coalition (national effort)**

The [No Child Left Inside Coalition](#) is comprised of more than 600 member groups from across the United States, and includes environmental, educational, business, public health, outdoor

recreation and conservation groups, representing tens of millions of individual members. The Click's focus is passage of the federal [No Child Left Inside Act](#). This legislation would authorize major new funding for states to provide high-quality, environmental instruction. Funds would support outdoor learning activities both at school and in non-formal environmental education centers, teacher training, and the creation of state environmental literacy plans. On September 19, 2008, the [U.S. House of Representatives approved the No Child Left Inside Act of 2008](#). The bill received bipartisan support and was approved by a vote of 294 to 108. Congress is expected to revisit the issue in 2009, and the NCLIC will continue to work to complete final passage and secure funding for the No Child Left Inside Act. To learn more, please visit: [www.nclicoalition.org](http://www.nclicoalition.org).



#### **The Children & Nature Network**

Inspired by Richard Lou's groundbreaking book *Last Child in the Woods*, the [Children & Nature Network](#) (C&NN) was created to encourage and support the people and organizations working to reconnect children with nature. The network provides a critical link between researchers and individuals, educators and organizations dedicated to children's health and well being. C&NN also promotes fundamental institutional change and provides resources for sharing information, strategic initiatives and success stories. The C&NN

website, [www.childrenandnature.org](http://www.childrenandnature.org), offers the latest news and research in this field as well as practical advice, including ways to apply new-found knowledge at home, at school, in work environments, and in the community. The network also provides a forum for publishing and presenting research, reports and case studies on children's health and nature, and related program-development strategies and support. *Note:* In Maryland, [Hooked on Nature](#) is an active supporter of C&NN and hosts the Baltimore Children & Nature Conference and a networking site: [Greater Baltimore Children & Nature Network](#).

## ATTENTION ALL MARYLAND GREEN SCHOOLS, GREEN CENTERS AND "WANNABES"

**Be greener....Save time, money, and paper!**

When the time comes to submit or recertify, prepare an electronic submission of your application on CD if you prefer. Here are the guidelines:

You must use PowerPoint software to develop your application. Include two paper copies of your cover sheet and summary with your submission.

**No email applications will be accepted.** You can hand deliver your application at certain locations around the Maryland. Check the official application online for the complete guidelines and drop-off locations at MAEOE's website:

[www.maeoe.org](http://www.maeoe.org).

### Help!

We need just a few moments of your time to help us collect some data to quantify the impressive and important work Maryland Green Schools and Green Centers are accomplishing. Included with your application, you will find a checklist to record information such as the number of trees planted, the size of your rain garden, the amount of energy you have saved, and the number of blue bird boxes installed, among other things. Completing this checklist is voluntary and not a required part of the application. However, providing the information will help show the great work Maryland Green Schools and Green Centers, collectively, are accomplishing.

**Other breaking news:** Recreational Equipment Inc. (REI) is once again providing funding to support the Maryland Green School Awards

program. If you shop in one of their local stores (College Park, Rockville or Timonium), please remember to thank the staff. We couldn't do it without them!

### New Ideas for Environmental Best Management Practices (BMPs):

Maryland Green Schools and Centers have options! There are countless ways to model best practices. Here is a sampling of some new sites, each with some great ideas. Go to [www.maeoe.org](http://www.maeoe.org) for a complete list.

For starters, check out these websites:

[www.itreetools.org/treecalculator](http://www.itreetools.org/treecalculator) to calculate carbon dioxide, rainwater uptake, electricity savings and other environmental benefits from planting the specific tree species in your planting project. Visit [www.terracycle.net](http://www.terracycle.net) to recycle many products that are not usually recycled, such as yogurt containers, cookie wrappers, Bear Naked cereal bags, among many other items.: Support local farms by promoting a buy local, eat fresh campaign by visiting [www.buy-local-challenge.com](http://www.buy-local-challenge.com). Locate funding for school-based projects at [www.lowes.com/AboutUs/CommunityPartnerships](http://www.lowes.com/AboutUs/CommunityPartnerships). Find ideas about walking and biking to school at [www.walktoschool-usa.org](http://www.walktoschool-usa.org). New guidelines for working on indoor air quality issues are at [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools). Go to [www.dnr.state.md.us/education/are/row/](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/education/are/row/) to learn about the River of Words contest for art and poetry. Finally, [www.rainscapes.org](http://www.rainscapes.org) provides information and suggestions for rain gardens, rain barrels and permeable pavers.

*GREEN SCHOOLS HAD 9.9% HIGHER AVERAGE OF STUDENTS SCORING IN THE EXCELLENT RANGE ON MSA THAN NON-GREEN SCHOOLS – CLAVIJO '05*





## 24<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MAEOE CONFERENCE

FEB 27 – MARCH  
1, 2009  
CLARION RESORT  
OCEAN CITY, MD

REGISTRATION  
OPENS NOVEMBER  
1, 2008

## 2009 MAEOE CONFERENCE

We heard you asking for more professional development opportunities targeting non-formal educators. We heard you asking for different presenters. We heard you asking for deeper discounts for MAEOE members. We heard you asking for more, more, and still more. We hear quite a lot – and we listen! The conference committee has consequently been working hard since April to provide you with what you want. If the financial crisis had you thinking about skipping the conference in 2009, think again. Make the time and budget accordingly for Shades of Green: Exploring Diversity in Our Environment, the 24<sup>th</sup> annual MAEOE Conference scheduled for February 27-March 1, 2009, at the Clarion Resort in Ocean City.

New for 2009:

- ✿Wilderness First Aid Training (Thursday-Friday)
- ✿Diversity Panel Discussion: three individuals share how they are working to broaden the environmental education constituency to include more black and brown faces.
- ✿Carbon Neutral Conference: we've reduced the size of our carbon footprint and our impact on the environment.
- ✿Book Swap: save a tree. Bring a book – take a book.
- ✿New presenters including Maryland Public Television, National Geographic, American Forests, Every Body Yoga, Lexmark International, Gaia Theory, University of Maryland, and many others.
- ✿Service Project: Plant dune grasses Sunday morning on your way home.

**Save more money on the conference by becoming a member of MAEOE**

There's just so much going on, you will just have to go to the website – [www.maeoe.org](http://www.maeoe.org) to discover it all. **Registration opens on November 1<sup>st</sup>.** Register early and register often.



## ENERGY ACTION COALITION

There has probably been no more perfect time for a massive grassroots movement by students and young people – *young leaders* – to address the interconnected issues of global climate change, sustainability, and clean, renewable energy than now. *And that movement is afoot!*

During the 2008 election season, the Energy Action Coalition, an enthusiastic and diverse assembly of 46 environmental and social justice organizations, more than 700 local and

regional groups, and 270,000-plus individuals, launched the Power Vote Campaign, advocating for energy efficiency, renewable energy research and development, green jobs, just and sustainable communities, while ending national dependence on dirty energy. These goals were supported by wide-ranging efforts stretching from college campuses to state houses, from political assemblies to the Internet. In fact, the campaign was nothing less than the very modern model of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century campaign. Beyond exhaustive hands-on action, recruitment and rallies, the initiative found a natural platform online, Continued on pg 5



## ENERGY ACTION COALITION (CONTINUED)

a veritable kitchen sink of outreach and social networking, from Facebook to YouTube to exuberant galleries on Flickr. Fun was blended with serious dedication, all geared to help win clean energy victories at polling places across North America.

But Power Vote is just the latest incarnation of the Energy Action Coalition, which actually began in 2004, and came of age with the organization's exciting Campus Climate Challenge in 2006. That undertaking has taken root now in more than 700 colleges and universities in the United States, with more than 550 campuses having made tangible commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In late 2007, the Coalition successfully rolled out Power Shift 2007 at the University of Maryland in College Park, attended by more than 6,000 enthusiastic attendees.

### AVOID THE BIG CHILL: FUN COLD WEATHER HABITAT PROJECT

#### IDEAS BY: JULIE DIEGUEZ

Don't let falling temperatures put your habitat project on ice; fall and winter provide fantastic natural learning opportunities. Begin by simply exploring your schoolyard for signs of plants and animals preparing for winter. From leaves changing color, birds devouring wildflower seeds, squirrels and chipmunks busily collecting nuts and preparing winter shelters, to the appearance of woolly bear caterpillars, all are sure signs winter fun is on its way!

**LEAVES:** As leaves drop from the trees, take an opportunity to find and observe insect galls, deserted bird and wasp nests, and bee hives. Create ID charts, field guides or flash cards with fallen leaves and pressed flowers. Create leaf rubbings, evergreen prints and natural needle paintbrushes. And all those fallen leaves mean it's a perfect time to finally [start a compost bin](#).

This year, of course, we've witnessed Power Vote. And, because the challenges are still there – as is the voice and will of the young people behind the Energy Action Campaign – 2009 will bring us Power Shift 2009. Stay tuned!

To find out more about the Coalition, its programs, resources, and goals, as well to learn about the numerous coalition partners, which include local groups such as Chesapeake Climate Action Network, the University of Maryland (College Park), St. Mary's College, and Montgomery County Students for Environmental Action, among many others, visit the Energy Action Coalition at:

<http://www.powervote.org/energyaction>.

**SEEDS:** The seed heads of Black-eyed Susans, coneflowers and many other fading summer beauties provide valuable food for birds as the weather grows colder. Collecting seeds from wildflowers in your habitat is an inexpensive and educational opportunity to restock or extend your habitat project. Use some of the seeds you collect to make a chart to identify seeds and the ways they disperse.

**MIGRATION:** As the temperature goes down, birds and butterflies go up. Autumn is a fantastic time to observe migration patterns. In early fall, thousands of monarch butterflies head south. Be sure to have planted large plots of milkweed, the only host and food plant for monarch caterpillars.

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*REMEMBER  
THREE  
IMPORTANT  
WORDS: TURN IT  
OFF. DON'T  
LEAVE THE  
VIDEO GAME ON  
PAUSE, OR THE  
COMPUTER IN  
SLEEP MODE.  
THOSE  
ELECTRONICS  
ARE STILL USING  
ENERGY, EVEN  
WHEN YOU  
AREN'T USING  
THEM.*



## HABITAT (CONTINUED)

Students can watch the entire amazing monarch lifecycle in their own schoolyard and even participate in a [monarch tagging project](#). Learn more about [planting to attract butterflies](#) online. Fall is also a wonderful time to observe a large variety of birds as they pass through our area on their way to warmer regions. Hawks are more visible at this time of year than any other, and huge flocks of robins, swallows, blackbirds and snow geese fill the skies. Check out [Hawk Mountain](#), [Blackwater Eagle Festival](#) and [Project FeederWatch](#). Learn more about attracting and studying birds in our [project section](#).



**ATTRACTING BIRDS:** The best way to [provide food for birds](#) and other wildlife is to plant native food sources for them. For supplemental feeding, create natural feeders, such as coating pinecones in suet and seed, or tearing up invasive vines such as Asian bittersweet to make wildlife wreaths with seed and fruit. Take the opportunity to build and hang [birdhouses](#). Colorful bluebirds will start looking for nesting sites by February.

**HISTORY:** Fall and winter mean monthly holiday celebrations, many of which have historical connections with nature. Explore the many practical and historical uses of gourds, grasses, berries, pumpkins, apples, corn and seeds, the significance of plants and animals in holiday customs, and more. Consider planting an historical [theme garden](#) to demonstrate some of the traditional uses of various plants for food, medicine and clothing.

**INDOOR PROJECTS:** Colder weather provides an opportunity for you and your students to concentrate on indoor projects. Take this time to design your next [habitat project](#) or additions to existing projects. Think about helping nature from the inside out by starting [recycling or waste reduction projects](#), or starting plants from seed. Start your school on the path to becoming a [Green School](#)!

For more information on creating and utilizing habitat projects, please visit our [Schoolyard Habitat](#) pages. There you will find information on [getting started](#), [habitat project how-to's](#), [connecting your project to the VSC](#), much more!



## ECOSCHOOLS

**Ecoschools US** is a non-profit, independent advocacy network that promotes the greening of K-12 educational facilities and daycare centers.

The organization's website, [www.ecoschools.us](http://www.ecoschools.us), provides a new and integrated platform to exchange contacts, ideas and resources between green schools experts, advocates and school system employees. The site also features related news, presentations, events, training, sponsorship and grant opportunities. A special resources section provides videos, press articles and interviews.

There is no cost for membership in Ecoschools US, but application is subject to approval by the network. Approved members gain access to a faculty of renowned green schools experts offering presentations and free consultations on the subject of sustainable school design, operations and education.

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THE NATURAL  
WORLD*

## ECOSCHOOLS CONT.

The Ecoschools network was founded in 2008 by Anja Caldwell, a LEED-certified architect trained in Germany, and an acclaimed expert in green building design and implementation for schools. She calls Ecoschools US "an independent pollinator that is spreading green ideas and information like a busy bee."

Ms. Caldwell recognizes that because of budget and schedule constraints, sustainability has not become a priority in the majority of American school districts. It is believed that the independent Ecoschools network will make readily available the necessary tools and training desperately needed by school system decision-makers, facility managers, teachers and staff, thereby enabling them

to move forward with sustainable design, while further demonstrating sustainable leadership, all without wasting valuable time and resources in an unnecessary learning curve.

For more information about the Ecoschools US network, contact Anja Caldwell, at 240.481.5779 or email [info@ecoschools.us](mailto:info@ecoschools.us). To understand more about the goals, vision, and resources of Ecoschools US, or to apply for membership, visit the network website: [www.ecoschools.us](http://www.ecoschools.us).



*CHECK OUT THE  
INTERACTIVE MAP  
TO FIND GREEN  
SCHOOLS AND  
CENTERS NEAR  
YOU!*

[HTTP://WWW.MA  
EOE.ORG/MAP/](http://www.maеоe.org/map/)



## BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE...

Want to know more about MAEOE? Become more involved? Find out what is going on?

Check out our website for the [Calendar of Events](#).

Remember you do not have to be on the MAEOE board to go to board or committee meetings!

If you have ideas, suggestions or articles for future editions of *MAEOE Connections* please send them to: [connections@maеоe.org](mailto:connections@maеоe.org).



